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The Charleston Gazette-Mail, W.Va., Statehouse Beat column

2017-11-26 | Coal Valley News (Madison, W.Va.)

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Nov. 26—Regarding last week's item on the state Supreme Court spending \$21,502 for a one-day lecture on "advanced judicial writing" by Bryan Garner, Justice Robin Davis wanted to make clear that the court's vote to approve the expenditure was not unanimous.

"I voted against the one-day lecture," she said. "You simply cannot train new law clerks to write opinions in one day."

Davis said her clerks did not attend the lecture or receive copies of the course book (which cost \$25 each).

The justice said she also proposed a much less expensive alternative, a proposal that was rejected by the majority of justices.

"We have some very experienced senior clerks that have in the past mentored new clerks," Davis said. "We have also had a series of senior law clerks in our court do mini-seminars, for lack of a better word, for new clerks."

Meanwhile, the whole Supreme Court episode is a good example of my theory of the dynamics of disproportionate outrage over wasteful government spending.

A billion dollars of wasteful federal spending or a million dollars of wasteful state spending will draw clucks and sighs, but the outrage isn't sustainable because the amounts are simply incomprehensible for most people.

Meanwhile, the question circulating around the Capitol is, what happened to the blue-green leather couch that was in Justice Allen Loughry's office when he was sworn in back in December 2012? (If you search Google Images, you'll find a picture of Loughry and his wife and son sitting on the couch in what was then his new office.)

The couch was purchased for late Justice Joe Albright, and apparently disappeared somewhere between the court and Surplus Property.

(For purposes of full disclosure, much of the furnishings of the Press Room, including our couch, are items liberated from the loading dock en route to Surplus Property over the years. However, the blue-green leather couch isn't down here.)

AO386-C

GOVERNMENT EXHIBIT	
CASE NO.	2:18-cr-00134
EXHIBIT NO.	91

Is Your Mayor Onboard?

[\(../take-action;/sessionid=quq7grqih7481sh22hpc;engagementid=444293\)](#)

As Congress finishes last year's budget process and plans ahead for next year's spending, it's critical that local cities play an active part in the process. That's why RPA is asking you to write your local Mayor's office and recruit them in the campaign for better train service for all Americans!

Tell the President: Make American Trains Great Again!

[\(../take-action;/sessionid=quq7grqih7481sh22hpc;engagementid=435694\)](#)

As part of the President's infrastructure and budget proposals released this week, the White House has called for the virtual elimination of Amtrak's National Network to help "pay for" \$200 billion in grants. Eliminating the National Network will cause 220 communities will lose service and over 140 million riders will be left at the station. The President must hear from everyday Americans about how important these service are. Take action today!

Join RPA in Asking for Strong Rail Investment in

2018! [\(../take-action;/sessionid=quq7grqih7481sh22hpc;engagementid=435854\)](#)

As Congress finishes last year's budget process and plans ahead for next year's spending, it's critical that train passengers play an active part in the process. That's why RPA is asking you to call your elected officials in Congress as part in our 2018 campaign to build a safer, more reliable rail network. Join us in working for better train service for Americans!

Congress Must Show Leadership on Rail (../take-action:isessionid=qug7grglh7481sh22hpcengagementid=473053)

Amtrak's new management has responded to record federal appropriations for passenger rail by announcing a series of decisions that erodes current levels of service, the most recent of which throws the future of the Southwest Chief into doubt. In light of these decisions, Rail Passengers is asking Congress to show leadership and demand Amtrak publicly reaffirm its commitment to running a National Network. Act today!

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